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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses program development at the Granville Work Preparation Centre in Australia, which teaches mildly retarded adolescents work and social skills. Some broad parameters considered in program development are listed and include recognition of the Center's industrial setting, and disruption in routines through extra movement of trainees within work areas. Ten principles of instruction used at the Center are presented and include the use of task sequencing; and the use of task analysis. Fourteen training strategies and techniques are listed and include modeling, roleplay, and visits to community facilities. Programs developed at the Center are briefly summarized, among them deficit social skills and social development training programs, a training program for instructors, sound and slide programs on radiator assembly, an experimental program for modification of conceptual tempo, and an experimental reading program. (DLS)

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(This is one of a series of reports and working papers concerned with the development and evaluation of programs at the Granville Work Preparation Centre by a Macquarie University Research Team. Details of other reports which are available are found on the back page)

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PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF WORK AND SOCIAL SKILLS[1,2]

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As one of two centres, the Granville Work Preparation Centre, funded by the Department of Social Security, trains mildly intellectually handicapped adolescents in work, social and behavioural skills. The ultimate aim of such training is that the trainee should gain and maintain open employment, as well as be socially competent in the community.

Within this applied setting, the Macquarie University Research Team has been concerned with the process evaluation of training programs (Ward et al, 1977b,1978) for, since its inception, the Granville Work Preparation Centre has gradually evolved from an exposure model of training to a model involving specific skill acquisition programs tailored to meet the needs of individual trainees. Thus experimental programs specifically designed to meet these demands in particular problem areas have been developed, utilizing both learning principles and various instructional strategies (Parmenter, 1977). These problems have ranged across the areas of social competency, language development, instruction following, skill development, conceptual style, reading and task construction.

As these experimental programs have all operated within the basic principles as detailed by Miss B. Scott, Program Director (1977a, 1977b), they have been developed with certain considerations common to all, pertinent to their implementation within the organizational and physical setting of the Granville WPC.

Apart from content area, broad parameters that had to be considered when developing an experimental program in such an applied setting were:

- recognition of the industrial setting in the WPC.
- availability of relevant training areas.
- disruption in Centre routines through extra movement of trainees in work areas.
- consequent problems of noise, and interruption to daily routines which needed accommodation.
- need to fit into Centre ongoing programs in terms of other trainees, hours of operation, etc.
- number of personnel available and their qualifications.
- instructors' commitments to other trainees' programs and administrative tasks.
- availability of an incentive payment scheme already established in Centre.

- availability of resources and equipment, and access to community facilities.
- portability of equipment.
- acceptance by Centre staff of the experimenter and the experimental program.

Principles of Instruction

Given these considerations within which any experimental program had to operate, several specific research projects have been carried out. These projects utilized and adhered to a number of principles of instruction which are listed below. Where appropriate, these principles were used in training techniques employed by instructors and personnel at the Centre (Hauritz, 1978; Owens, 1978; Riches, 1978) and even, in some cases, by trainees themselves who were encouraged to become involved in their own behaviour management programs (Gow, 1977, Riches, 1978).

The principles of instruction were:

1. Task Analysis of each skill - industrial and social. This included either modapts and/or a step by step task analysis.
2. Task sequencing.
3. Utilization of individual and/or group instructions.
4. Specified instructional procedures. These varied with each experiment, and involved different techniques such as step by step paced instruction, chunking, and questioning to encourage the self operation of instructions.
5. Continuous monitoring of performance.
6. Controlled feedback procedures.
   a) to instructors
   b) to trainee, work goal, quality of work, concentration, relationship with supervisor, with workmates.
7. The use of graphing, precision charting and various recording procedures.
   a) by experimenter
   b) by trainees
8. The use of behavioural techniques, particularly intermittent praise. social praise, ignoring inappropriate behaviour. On the trainees' part, use of self monitoring behavioural techniques included physical and mental relaxation, systematic desensitization, thought stopping, control of worry, internal monologue, imaginal modelling, etc.
9. All experimental programs placed an emphasis on language and communication skills. Strategies developed placed stress on the trainee taking responsibility for his own language, communication and actions.
10. Modification of these programs into the applied setting.

Training Strategies and Techniques

Numerous training strategies and techniques currently available have been found effective in modifying performance in social and job skill domains. Although some of our projects have favoured one or two particular techniques, a number have been used in common. These have included:

1. Modelling
2. Roleplay
3. Behaviour and verbal rehearsal
4. Videotape roleplay, replay and feedback.
5. Simulation games
6. Group games, e.g. choices and trust games
7. Behavioural self management techniques
8. Real life experiences, e.g. restaurant visit
9. Visits to community facilities
10. Discussion
11. Debate
12. Contracting
13. Backward chaining
14. Matching to sample

A major benefit gained by the usage of such a variety of techniques has been a gradual increase in staff expertize and willingness to apply these training principles and techniques to training programs other than the experimental projects in which they were originally used. Thus the staff have been able to develop a wider repertoire of teaching strategies which they feel confident to apply or reject on their own initiative, dependent upon the individual trainee and/or the situation.

Programs Developed

Deficit Social Skills and Social Development Training Programs - Stage I & II

A number of problem areas in social competence have been identified: in literature reviews, in personal experience of instructors at the GWPC and through follow-up studies of individuals who have left the WPC for employment in the open or sheltered setting (Ward et al, 1977, 1978). Examination of these deficit social areas led to the development of a comprehensive program for the acquisition of social and interpersonal skills.

This program currently being trialled in other settings beyond the WPC, consists of two basic sections or stages, each requiring slightly different levels of entry skills. Stage I was designed to cater for all incoming trainees and does not, therefore, require any pre entry skills. Stage II was constructed for a more advanced stage of development and, therefore, some pre entry skills are generally required which have been acquired via Stage I programs.

Experimental Staff Training Program for Instructors

The need to objectively record trainee performance developed, as previously mentioned, as the WPC moved from an exposure model to one of specific skills development for the individual trainee. Instructors needed to be able to pinpoint behaviours; set realistic objectified goals for trainees, evaluate goal outcomes and establish new or modified goals. To establish and maintain desired behaviours in the trainees, instructors also needed to acquire basic behavioural principles.

These concerns led to the development of an experimental program for instructors consisting of five units.

The first two sections used, as resource material videotapes of typical trainee behaviour. Desired and undesired trainee-instructor interactions were also recorded. These two initial sections dealt with observation and recording of behaviour and basic principles of behaviour management.

The next three sections dealt with decisions, in terms of precision teaching, that could be made from trainee charted performance, task analysis and the effective use of Modapts, in task specification.

Sound/Slide Programs of Radiator Assembly

The Radiator Assembly Experimental Program developed from research within the factory area itself on the feasibility of backward chaining as a strategy for the acquisition of skills in this task. The aim of this experimental package was to teach pre production trainees all pertinent construction stages and details in the construction of the radiator which was under production in the factory.

A sound on slide program consisting of three major units has been devised. These units are:

1. an overview of stages in Assembly of an electric radiator.
2. specification of materials and tools used in the various job stations.
3. instructions for various stages of radiator assembly

With this presentation, trainees can be criterion tested for acquisition of pertinent details and either move onto the next unit or undertake the same unit again, but with the required diagnostic area included. The instructor is both able to receive immediate feedback on trainee's performance and to give feedback to trainees on their acquisition.

Experimental Program for Modification of Conceptual Tempo

An experimental Program designed to moderate the trainees' conceptual style arose from the problem expressed by instructors that trainees responded too impulsively.

This impulsivity was affecting skill development in a variety of job situations throughout the factory.

The research on this dimension of conceptual style was investigated on a collating task. This task required attention to fine detail and also required the trainee to be able to organize his work area. The research was able to demonstrate, both an educationally and statistically significant instructional method wherein the trainee himself was able to modify his own impulsive behaviour and develop more reflective behaviour in task performance.

Experimental Reading Program

As mentioned in a previous session by Trevor Parmenter, an Experimental Reading Program involving tool name and tool recognition has also been undertaken and its efficacy in an applied setting has been demonstrated.

These experimental programs have arisen from the identification of a problem that has obstructed acquisition and/or maintenance of work or social skills within the Centre. While reviews of research in the relevant areas have guided the experimental research and helped generate experimental programs, these, to gain validity, now require further trialling in other establishments and across different populations.

Hence, as well as training MIH adolescents to undertake a widened lifestyle, it is hoped that the Granville WPC will become an exemplary model as suggested by Ward et al (1977) and that programs developed at the Centre can ultimately be of benefit to other establishments and a wider section of the community who may have similar problems or deficits.

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APPENDIX

Experimental Social Development Training Program

1. Self Concept-Self Awareness Program

   Problems — lack of awareness of self - facts, abilities and attitudes.

   Content — program centres around acquisition of basic knowledge about the self - facts, attitudes, opinions, abilities, ideals, etc.

   Method — numerous activities, discussion, debate, games, e.g. choices, ability tasks.

2. Social Skills - Interpersonal Skills

   Problems
   a) lack of appropriate body language, e.g. eye contact, touching, posture, stance, etc.
   b) lack of awareness and, therefore, response to non verbal cues, e.g. when to approach, depart, speak up, remain silent, etc.
   c) lack of verbal communication patterns, e.g. excessive timidity in speaking and putting forward ideas, facts, messages; tendency to allow interactor to complete the sentence for them; inability to convey messages or instructions.
   d) lack of skills in initiating, maintaining and terminating a conversation or interaction.
   e) poor social interaction skills - general and situation specific.
   f) lack of skills in social situations, e.g. eating in restaurant, making theatre bookings, etc.

   Method — the various techniques listed were all utilized for various segments of the program, e.g. eye contact - confronting exercise, initiating, maintaining and terminating conversation - behaviour rehearsal, roleplay, video tape feedback, social situations - roleplay and actual life experiences, e.g. trip to restaurant.

3. Assertive Training

   Problems
   a) extreme acquiescence or aggression, lack of appropriate assertion.
   b) problems in saying "no" - to salesmen, when asked to loan money,when being imposed upon.
   c) giving and receiving compliments.
   d) knowledge of what to do not translated into practice, e.g. when asked about signing a form that is not understood : 80% said - "no, shouldn't sign" - yet 100% actually signed when faced with situation

   Method — Exercises, roleplay, etc., in saying "No". Constant rehearsal of each step, use of behavioural techniques to help.

4. Relaxation - Prevention of Anxiety

Adaptation of Mitchell, Piatkowska & White's "Prevention and Self Management of Anxiety", Part 1.

Problems — Stress and anxiety often particularly high in this population, although individuals were often unaware of their own high anxiety levels, signs of anxiety and coping behaviour.

Method — Cassette + manual - charting and graphing

5. Hygiene and Grooming

Problems — personal hygiene and how to cope with this.

Method — actual demonstration and activity, hair care, nails care, clothes care, dental care.

6. Friendship

Problems — loneliness, isolation of MIH individuals; lack of awareness or understanding on how to approach people, what to expect from friendships, appropriate behaviour, where to look for friends, common activities to pursue,etc.

Method — open discussion, roleplay, TA (transaction analysis), exploration of group dynamics.

7. Communication in a Work Setting

Problems — deficit skills in communicating with foreman, supervisors and managers, and with other workers were evident.

Content/ Method — Simulation game in which trainees accept roles of managers, foremen, workers,and have to communicate with roles, work demands, negotiate for salary and working conditions, then communicate in the work setting itself. Included are production demands and problems, reject rates, dealing with problems arising in work quality,etc.

Stage II - Programs

1. Use of leisure time, options for leisure.
2. Availability of community facilities and resources and how to use these.
3. Citizenship - rights and responsibilities as citizens, the legal process, Court practice --
4. Sex education program
5. Vocational Independence Training

Extension Courses in:

6. social skill training
7. assertion training
8. behavioural self management
9. health and hygiene

Experimental Staff Training Programs for Instructors

Unit 1 Behaviour Observation and Recording Methods

Problems pinpointing of behaviour and objective recording of trainee performances required by instructors.

Content Unit 1 demonstrates how behaviour can reliably be observed, counted and recorded, on a variety of graph dependent upon the end data required.

Method Use of video to demonstrate behaviours. Roleplay of trainee and instructor behaviours necessary for reliable graphing.

Unit 2 Principles and Procedures of Behavioural Management

Problems Behavioural principles and management skills required by instructors.

Content Basic behavioural terms and management principles demonstrated.

Method Use of video tape demonstrating instructor-trainee interactions. Roleplay by group of behavioural principles using tasks new to instructors.

Unit 3 Use of Graphical Data in Decision Making

Problems Instructors needed to be able to use charts as tools in making decisions on trainee's performance towards set goals.

Content Unit examines setting achievable aims for trainees using either minimum time goal or minimum rate of learning; common sense reading of data.

Method Instructors work set examples from unit, using data plotted graphs. Peer tutoring.

Unit 4 Further Analysis of Graphical Data, Task Analysis

Problems Instructors required skills to gain added data from graphs and also require task analysis skills.

Content More complex analysis of rate graphs; task analysis examined; use of Modapts and its application examined.

Method Instructor guided through unit on rate graphs with necessary data.

Unit 5 Overview of Units and Application to Training Problem Areas

Problems Instructors required overview of units presented.

Content Marc Gold Films

Method Films viewed then discussed in terms of Centre's training procedure for any trainee.

Radiator Assembly Experimental Program

Experimental Program consisting of three units:

1. overview of construction stages and machines used.
2. identification of tools used and individual parts entailed in construction.
3. construction of base structure presented in detail.

Unit 1 Overview of Stages in Assembly of an Electric Radiator

Problem: Trainees require overview of various stages in construction of radiator, from arrival of raw material to end product.

Content: Each stage in construction and machine used is identified

- . construction of base structure
- . construction of grills
- . completion of base structure

Method: Task analyzed sequence of sound on slide series is undertaken by trainee. Performance evaluated at completion using checklist. Instructor can identify areas that require additional practice to reach criterion.

Unit 2 Specification of Materials and Tools Used in Various Job Stations

Problem: Trainees require name of tools and individual items composing radiator.

Content: Sequential listing of item named,followed by item not named. Some clustering of items at strategic points were all required for subtask.

Method: As in unit 1 also tools collected from tool store, after completing tool voucher.

Unit 3 Instructions for Various Stages of Radiator Assembly

Problem: Trainees require to be able to sequence assembly when attending to pertinent cues, various substages in construction of base structure.

Content: Exploded view of construction for various components, on slide. Various substages also able to be constructed from exploded view, using actual component parts.

Method: Trainee works through sequences slides, constructing various substructures where necessary. Instructor reprograms various areas until criterion reached on all constructions.

Modification of Conceptual Tempo-Training Package

Problem: Trainees responding too impulsively in skill acquisition consequently resulting in poor quality production output.

Content: Trainees required to collate complex folder which involves numerous decisions and careful attention to fine detail.

Method: Reflectivity of trainees increased by requiring that they state what should be done first and to think before they acted. Correct behaviour reinforced immediately.

Experimental Tool Recognition Reading Program

Problem: Trainees required to be able to recognize and read tool names.

Content: Trainees required to recognize each tool in a set of 10 tool colour slides.

Method: Coloured individual slides of tool with name underneath; shown for specified time on screen. Trainee had to name tool shown. Other trainee marked, on checklist, if tool was correctly named. Sound/slide unit supplied correct tool name after set time per slide.

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